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FLOOR DEBATE

March 17, 2004      LB 724, 1083

is through the workings of the Legislature that we can do this. It is far past its time. We actually initiated LB 692 several years ago with the tobacco settlement dollars, and we put \$19 million of that \$50 million a year that we're taking out of that system for mental health, also to develop community-based services, of which many are up and running, doing well. And LB 724 last year, which was passed unanimously, laid out a road map that we should proceed, and now, through this, we are now completing it with the implementation of LB 1083. I might mention, Mr. President, that our committee, I and my staff, have had numerous meetings, got to be close to in the hundreds, in meeting with individuals throughout the state and then also as this bill developed and as this session has become, as we're now into the remaining days of the session, we have continued to have meetings, two meetings yet today. And I'd hope that we could come to a consensus from the communities that are affected and also the Health and Human Services Committee and certainly the promoters of this bill. We have not reached consensus at this particular time. There is a place for those two communities. They've been in service in mental health for many, many years. I hope they will continue in that service for many, many years also. I hope that we can come to a consensus, again, because it is the right thing to do for those individuals who need services so desperately. With that, I'll close on the committee amendments, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BROMM PRESIDING

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Connealy, if you would approach, and Senator Jensen, please. A division of the committee amendment has been requested and has been arrived at, and I'll ask the Clerk to explain that division and then Senator Jensen will have an opportunity to open on the first division of the divided amendment. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, the division pertains, of course, to the original committee amendment, AM2889. The first component will consist of Sections 1 through 9. The second component will consist of Section 10. The third component will consist of Sections 11 and 12. The fourth component will consist of Sections 13 through 17. The fifth component will be Section 18;